



The Ministry and Department of Education appoint a commission for a feasible “Obligatory Educational Law”

Recently the Minister of Education, Marisol Lopez-Tromp and the Head of the Department of Education, Roseleen Oduber conducted a press conference to inform the public of efforts to institute a law that will make education obligatory for all children in Aruba between the ages of four and seventeen.

Though Aruba has an extensive school system based on the Dutch system, there is no existing law that requires parents to send their children to school, and the minister stated that she would like to see that law in place by the beginning of the next school year in August of 2007.

Presently, the plan of the Ministry and Department of Education for a commission under the leadership of Elgin Nicolas to conduct a three month study into the finances, infrastructure and enforcement required to introduce and support such a law responsibly. The commission will consist of representatives from the educational agencies of SKOA, SMOA, SEPB, SPCOA, along with the Directie and Openbaar Onderwijs.

Minister Lopez-Tromp and Ms. Oduber acknowledge that the success of such a law will be a cooperative effort by a number of agencies, including the social departments and the Community Police in controlling truancy. Particular groups that need to be controlled are high-school dropouts and children that in Aruba illegally, but which still have the right of an education. It will be the role of the Community Police and the social workers to take notice of children not in school and investigate why, requiring parents to provide sound reasons for the truancy.

“The law can make sure that the children are in school,” pointed out Minister Lopez-Tromp,” but it is the roll of the school to stimulate them and assist them in learning,” She asserted that part of the plan for the installation of the law would be to see that such programs would be put in place to facilitate this end. “All youth should be able to have a diploma in their hands to help them to a better future, and it is the responsibility of the schools to maintain a proper administration to achieve this goal.”